

## **89.3 KPCC - Take Two**

**Tuesday Reviews day: New music from Luciana Souza**

**by Steve Hochman**

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If you love music, but don't have the time to keep up with what's new, you should listen to Tuesday Reviewsday. Every week our critics join our hosts in the studio to talk about what you should be listening to, in one short segment. This week, music journalist Steve Hochman joins A Martinez.

**Artist: Luciana Souza**

**Album: "Speaking in Tongues"**

**Songs: "At the Fair," "Filhos de Gandhi"**

Summary: "Speaking in Tongues" is right. For most of the album Souza, a Brazilian-born singer based in Los Angeles with a very wide-ranging and impressive track record spanning jazz, bossa nova and other styles, sings in no language, at least no recognizable language — just what seems to be wordless sounds. Only two songs, coming at what on vinyl would be each side's end, have lyrics, both from Leonard Cohen with somber music by Souza. But it's the other material that really stands out here, her voice freed from concrete meanings to dart and fly into territories words can't touch, as a great instrumentalist flies.

She's not the only one "speaking," as it were. "Tongues" is a full-out conversation with two other lead musicians, guitarist Lionel Loueke and harmonica player Gregoire Maret, as well as with the rhythm section of bassist Massimo Biolcati and drummer Kendrick Scott, each a formidable artist in his own right and each contributing to the writing on this album. Together they evoke the classic Brazilian jazz-fusion of the '70s and '80s of such artists as Airto, Flora Purim, Hermeto Pascoal, Gilberto Gil, Milton Nascimento, Egberto Gismonti and even the poppier Sergio Mendes, but move beyond into their own fresh territories.

Loueke, born and raised in Benin and trained in Paris and at Berklee College of Music, has shown himself one of the most inventive and dexterous guitarists in jazz today working alongside such luminaries as Herbie Hancock and Terence

Blanchard, his touch at once delicate and powerful. The Swiss-born Maret may be the real revelation here, his bright, fleet chromatic runs often doubling Souza's voice, or at other times darting around her, the pair like two swallows at play.

It's in two Souza compositions that finds this interplay at its most exhilarating and delightful: opener "At the Fair" and "Filhos de Gandhi." The former establishes the wide field on which these considerable talents get to work, while the latter, Portuguese for "Sons of Gandhi," is a tribute to the colorful Northeast Brazilian carnival parade society that grew out of a 1948 dockworkers strike inspired by the nonviolent tactics of the Indian leader. Little in the way of words. Plenty in the way of meaning.